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THE TRADE-UNION POINT OF VIEW

Every outbreak of industrial warfare emphasizes the need of a better understanding of trade-union belief and argument. The assumption hitherto so common that serious conflicts between employers and organized laborers must always be the result of knavery or foolishness is becoming altogether untenable. Thinking men are being forced to recognize the existence of a distinctive trade-union view-point. This view-point, experience is teaching, is not a thing manufactured for foolish men by knavish leaders, but is the inevitable outcome of the conditions under which the laborers live and work. It is a thing, therefore, which cannot be materially changed by mere argument or denunciation. On the contrary, it is to be recognized as a matter of fact and understood, if we are to make any decided advance toward industrial peace. In the interests of such recognition and understanding, this paper proposes to examine two or three of the points on which unionists are spiritually at variance with their employers.¹

Among the main charges brought against the unionist by the employer are these: first, that he refuses to recognize the generally conceded rights of the employing class; secondly, that he does not recognize the sacredness of contract; thirdly, that while he is struggling to obtain higher wages and shorter hours of work, he persistently attempts to reduce the efficiency of labor and the extent of the output. Assuming these charges to be substantially correct² let us in the case of each seek without prejudice to discover the real grounds of the laborer's attitude and action.

¹ In this examination I wish to disclaim all bias. I have no intention of justifying unionism or of condemning the employers. My attitude is intended to be simply and purely scientific. The aim is merely to state and to explain on scientific grounds the position of the laborers.

² That these charges as they stand are substantially true there can be little doubt. Unionists frequently deny them *in toto*, but when these denials are carefully examined they usually turn out to be, not denials of the facts charged, but of the implications of stupidity and immorality which the facts are intended to convey.

1. The "rights" which the employer claims, and which the unionist is supposed to deny, may perhaps be summarily expressed in the phrase "the right of the employer to manage his own business." To the employer it is a common-sense proposition that his business is his own. To him this is not a subject for argument. It is a plain matter of fact, and carries with it the obvious rights of management unhampered by the authority of outside individuals. So unconscious and unquestioning indeed is the employer's acceptance of the existing order of things that he has come to regard his business prerogatives in the light of natural rights. It is hard, therefore—almost impossible, in fact—for him to believe that the unionist laborer, when he denies these rights, is not the deluded tool of self-seeking and unscrupulous leaders.

This attitude of the employer finds much support in our ordinary middle-class philosophy of rights. Middle-class thought generally recognizes the act of production as the ultimate source of proprietary rights. What a man has produced he has made his, to do with practically as he will. According to our middle-class mode of thinking also, the employer is always conceived to be the producer of what he owns. It is understood, of course, that he is often not the actual or the sole producer of wealth which he holds. But in such cases it is understood that he represents the producer by virtue of gift or contract. He succeeds, therefore, to all the proprietary rights of the producer; for to deny this would be to shatter our whole theory of social relations. To be sure, we recognize the limits which law puts upon the uses of property, but as we have been taught for so long that law is based on natural justice, we have come to look upon it in this case as a confirmation rather than as a limitation of the natural proprietary rights of the employing property-owner. When the laborer, therefore, demands that he be consulted in the conduct of business, we naturally and spontaneously decide against him. We are prone to regard his claim as a wilful attempt to appropriate the property and rights of another.

Stated thus the case against the laborer's intelligence or honesty seems to be a convincing one. But is it so in fact? Does the laborer, can he, situated as he is, look upon these matters from

the middle-class or employer's standpoint? The moment we honestly attempt to put ourselves in the place of the laborer we begin to realize that, in the very nature of things, he cannot. Though he too is a believer in natural rights and in the proprietary sanction of production, the circumstances of his life and work are making it absolutely impossible for him to see in the employer an actual producer, or the legitimate successor to the rights of an actual producer. Let us see how this is necessarily so.

The laborer, like all the rest of us, is the product of heredity and environment. That is to say, he is not rational in the sense that his response to any given mental stimulus is invariable and is uniform with that of all other men. On the contrary, like the rest of us, he is a bundle of notions, prejudices, beliefs, unconscious preconceptions and postulates, the product of his peculiar heredity and environment. These unconscious and subconscious psychic elements necessarily mix with and color his immediate impressions, and they together limit and determine his intellectual activity. What is or has been outside his ancestral and personal environment must be either altogether incomprehensible to him, or else must be conceived as quite like or analogous to that which has already been mentally assimilated. He cannot comprehend what he has not, or thinks he has not, experienced.

Now, it is well known that the environment of the laborer under the modern capitalistic system has tended to become predominantly one of physical force. He has been practically cut off from all knowledge of market and managerial activities. The ideals, motives, and cares of property-ownership are becoming foreign to him. More and more, in his world, spiritual forces are giving way to the apparent government and sanction of blind physical causation. In the factory and the mine spiritual, ethical, customary, and legal forces and authorities are altogether in the background. Everything to the worker, even his own activity, is the outcome of physical force, apparently undirected and unchecked by the spiritual element. The blast shatters the rock, and whatever of flesh and blood is in range is also torn in pieces. The presence and the majesty of law and contract are altogether ineffective in the face of physical forces let loose by the explo-

sion. In like manner the knife cuts, the weight crushes, the wheel mangles the man and the material with equal inevitableness. No sanction, religious, moral, customary, or legal, is there. Even outside the strictly mechanical occupations the machine and the machine process are coming to dominate the worker, and the growth in size of the industrial unit renders his economic relationships ever more impersonal—withdraws farther from his knowledge the directing and controlling spiritual forces. The laborer thus environed inevitably tends to look upon physical force as the only efficient cause and the only legitimizing sanction. He tends to become mentally blind to spiritual, legal, contractual, and customary forces and their effects.³

To the laborer, as the product of this environment, the proprietary and managerial claims of the employer tend to become, of necessity, simply incomprehensible. The only kind of production which he can recognize is the material outcome of physical force—the physical good. Value unattached to and incommensurable with the physical product or means of production is to him merely an invention of the employing class to cover up unjust appropriation. He knows and can know nothing about the capitalized value of managerial ability or market connections. To him, then, only the ownership of the physical product and the physical means of production is in question, and the important point with him is: By what physical force are these things made what they are? It is a matter of simple observation that the employer exerts no direct or appreciable physical force in connection with the productive process. Therefore, in the eyes of the laborer, he simply cannot have any natural rights of proprietorship and management based on productive activity.

In the same way all other grounds on which ownership and the managerial rights of the employer are based have become inconclusive to the laborer. Appropriation, gift, inheritance, saving, contract, in themselves do not produce any physical effect on the only goods which he can recognize. Therefore they cannot be used to prove property in any just or natural sense.

³ These ideas have become familiar to American readers, through the work of Professor Thorstein B. Veblen, especially in *The Theory of Business Enterprise*.

They hold in practice simply because back of them is the physical force of the police and army established and maintained by the middle class to protect its proprietary usurpations. Thus the whole claim of the employer to the right to manage his own business to suit himself has become and is becoming in a way incomprehensible to the laborer on grounds of natural equity. At the same time, by virtue of habit and the sanction of physical force as a productive agent, he sees himself ever more clearly the rightful proprietor of his job and of the products of it. All this is the natural and inevitable outcome of the conditions under which he lives and toils.

Undoubtedly the picture drawn here is too definite in its outlines. The laborer of today is not so completely under the domination of the machine and the machine process as I have assumed him to be. What I have assumed to be actualities exist perhaps only as more or less manifest tendencies. Other strong forces undoubtedly operate on the laborer to determine his actual viewpoint in this matter. But these forces are to a great extent such as to confirm rather than to disturb him in his peculiar beliefs and attitude toward proprietary rights. Not the least potent of these is undoubtedly the attitude which society itself takes toward the assertion of absolute property rights by the individual employer. In innumerable ways society utterly repudiates any such claim. This is the significance of building laws, condemnation laws, liability laws, factory acts, contract regulations, and a thousand and one other legal and customary restrictions on the free use of property. The inference—and the worker is not slow to take it—is plain that, if society should see fit to allow the laborers through their unions to force upon employers regulations, curtailing the present proprietary rights of management, there could be no appeal by the employers except to that same physical force which the laborer recognizes as the main foundation of property rights.

It must not be thought that I am seeking to justify the laborer in his attitude. As a scientific student it is no part of my duty either to justify or to condemn him. I am merely pointing out that his attitude toward the employers' assertion of rights, as

well as toward his own, is reasonable when viewed from his own peculiar standpoint, and that this standpoint is not the result necessarily of inferior intelligence or morality, but is the inevitable outcome of his mode of life and his peculiar surroundings. In short, I am simply trying to show that *his attitude has sufficient basis of natural and general causation which must be taken into consideration in any useful discussion of labor problems and their solution.* I am merely bringing evidence to bear on the assertion that, *if you wish to change the laborer's view-point materially, you cannot do it by warfare or denunciation. You must begin back of the man upon the determining influences which play upon him.*

2. The unionist laborer does not recognize the sacredness of contract. This is, if anything, a more serious charge than the preceding one. Is it possible that a man who deliberately and without any personal grievance stands ready to repudiate his contract obligations can be acquitted of moral or intellectual inferiority? Is it possible that he can be called reasonable, and that he deserves to be dealt with in any other way than by denunciation or legal and physical obstruction? Is it possible that these are not proper and effective weapons with which to recall him from his seeming perversity?

The employer returns to these questions, unhesitatingly, a decided negative. In so doing he meets with the approval of men generally who are well-to-do and educated. To the employer contract is the obviously necessary basis for any successful industrial activity. Violation of contract is therefore to him, and to those socially allied to him, the unpardonable economic sin. Without doubt it is rightly so. The essential business operations involve time and the division of labor. The benefits of capitalistic production, therefore—without which most of us would be reduced to primitive penury—require that men trust their means in the hands of others, and that many men be depended upon to perform certain economic tasks and obligations in certain definite ways and at certain times. Indeed, so delicate has become the adjustment of the modern productive enterprise, and so intimately are apparently independent enterprises related, that the

failure of a single individual to perform his contract obligation may possibly involve hundreds of others in financial ruin and the members of a whole commonwealth in temporary economic distress. This, of course, is in itself altogether commonplace. It is stated here merely because it shows why contract is and must be considered by the business class as the most sacred of all economic obligations. The business man's attitude toward contract is the inevitable outcome of his activity and environment. It is not so much a personal virtue with him as an evolutionary necessity. He cannot see things otherwise. He is made so by the conditions of his life.

Such being the case, we naturally jump to the conclusion that the sacredness of contract must appeal strongly to all men, and that in all men, however circumstanced, its violation must be the indication of moral depravity. Therefore, when the laborer does violate contract he is apt to be considered by us a moral pervert, and we naturally feel that to allow him a voice in the management of business would, by reason of his innate perversity, be to jeopardize the most important personal and social interests. But here we may be again too hasty in our generalization. If the laborers as a class *are* so circumstanced that loyalty to some obligation other than contract necessarily appears to them as the *sine qua non* of their well-being, shall we say that they are morally inferior if they violate contracts which by force of circumstances must appear to them to come into direct conflict with some more essential obligation?

As a matter of fact, the laborer *is* so circumstanced that obligation to contract with the employer must appear secondary in importance to his obligations to fellow-workers. This is not difficult to show. Ever since the establishment of the money-wage system, the everyday experience of the laborer has been teaching him the supreme importance of mutuality in his relations with his immediate fellow-workers. The money payment, related not to the physical result of his efforts, but to its economic importance, has been blotting out for him any direct connection between effort and reward. Experience has taught him to look upon his labor as one thing in its effects and another thing in its reward.

As a thing to be rewarded he has learned to consider it a commodity in the market. As such he knows that it is paid for at competitive rates, and he sees that the sharper the competition between himself and his fellows, the lower the rates are likely to be. He has learned that, if he undercuts his fellow, prompt retaliation follows, to the detriment of both, and he has learned that combination with his fellow results in better immediate conditions for both.

The worker does not, of course, look far beyond the immediate results. He is prone to accept them as real and ultimate. He knows, because he sees, that the result of competition with his fellow is to lower the wage-rate, and, as a product of the factory and wage systems, he cannot reasonably be expected to go farther. In severing the obvious connection between his task and the completed product, in removing from him all knowledge of the general conduct and condition of the business, in paying to him a fixed wage regardless of the outcome of the particular venture, and in paying him a wage never much in excess of his habitual standard of living, the factory and wage system have accustomed him to a hand-to-mouth existence, have barred him from all the training effects of property-ownership, and have atrophied his faculties of responsibility and foresight. Moreover, it is not to be expected that today's empty stomach will be comforted by tomorrow's hypothetical bread, least of all by bread which is likely to comfort the stomach of another. Is it any wonder, then, that the laborer does not and that he cannot follow the economist in his complicated arguments to prove that, in the long run and on the whole, the keenest competition among laborers brings the highest rewards?

Be that as it may, the essential point is that, as a result of the circumstances under which he works, the laborer actually does see the best hope for his betterment in ruling out competition between himself and his immediate trade associates. He does believe that individual underbidding, if habitually practiced, must cause the conditions of employment to deteriorate and reduce the wage to the starvation limit. From his view-point underbidding therefore is far more destructive of well-being than is

breach of contract with the employer. Thus scabbing becomes his unpardonable sin. Beside his moral duty to stand by his fellow-worker against the scab, standing by contract with his employer becomes relatively unimportant. To him it seems a case of self-preservation on the one hand, against comparatively slight interference with well-being on the other. *Proneness to breach of contract, therefore, is seen to be a natural and inevitable outcome of his life and working conditions. It is a thing to be remedied, if at all, only by changing conditions,* and it is a thing upon which, if we take all circumstances into consideration, it is difficult to found a charge of moral depravity.

The fact that the laborer is apt to accompany his contract-breaking with acts of brutality does not invalidate our explanation, and need not alter the conclusions which we have reached. The laborer cannot, of course, put himself in the employer's place. Therefore the hiring of scabs is, from his view-point, just as indicative of immorality as from the view-point of the employer is breach of contract by him. To him, indeed, scab-hiring is a species of contract-breach, since he looks upon himself as the owner of his job. To eliminate the scab, therefore, seems as justifiable to him as to the employer seems the elimination of the contract-breaker. That he slugs the scab in violation of law, while the employer regularly tries and imprisons the contract-breaker, does not necessarily indicate on his part greater brutality, lack of morality, or lack of reverence for law. It may mean simply that there is no law to enforce his essential rules of the game. Suppose there were a law to prevent the punishment of embezzlement, would the employers content themselves with moral suasion? What happened to the men who, in the sixties, under the protection of law, attempted in California to pay good debts with bad money? What happened, two or three years ago, to the striking miners in Colorado, and to the officials who tried to shield them? In each case the good business men of the community let it be understood that violation of the established rules of the game would be punished by death.

3. The third charge against the unionist which we have undertaken to examine states that while he is struggling for increase

of wages he is at the same time attempting to reduce the efficiency of labor and the amount of the output. In other words, while he is calling upon the employer for more of the means of life he is doing much to block the efforts of the employer to increase those means.

There is no doubt that this charge is to a great extent true. Unions constantly are demanding higher wages and better conditions of employment, coincident with shorter hours, limitation of the numbers of workers, handicapping of machine introduction, and more or less direct restrictions on individual output. To the employers "sanding the bearings" constitutes one of the most aggravating features of unionism. It is from his standpoint a perfectly clear case against the intelligence and right-mindedness of the unionist laborers. He reasons thus: The industrial product is the industrial dividend. This dividend is shared among the productive factors according to certain definite laws. Whatever, therefore, hampers efficiency, and thus limits or decreases the product, must correspondingly limit or diminish the shares. He honestly believes that in matters of output the interests of himself and of his laborers are identical. Both gain by increased efficiency, however attained; both lose by decrease of effort and output. He therefore constantly invites the co-operation of his workers in efforts to speed up the process and to increase the productive power of the establishment. Their refusal to co-operate with him in this simply astounds him. He cannot understand it on economic grounds. He feels that he has no choice but to look upon it as the result of stupidity or perversity. But here again it is possible that validity of conclusions may vary with the standpoint of the observer—that the laborer's attitude may be the legitimate outcome of what is for him a legitimate view-point. Let us see.

In reasoning upon this matter the employer habitually looks at industry either from the standpoint of competitive society as a whole or from that of the individual competitive establishment. Viewing competitive society as a whole, he assumes that actual or prospective increase in the goods' output means the bidding-up of wages by employers anxious to invest profitably increasing

social income. It follows that in competitive society laborers as a whole stand to gain with improvements in industrial effort and process. In the case of the individual competitive establishment it is clear that the maximum income is ordinarily to be sought in the highest possible efficiency, resulting in increased industrial output. At least this is true where there are numerous establishments of fairly equal capacity producing competitively from the same market. Under such circumstances the increased output of any one establishment due to "speeding up" will ordinarily have but a slight, if any, appreciable effect on price. Each individual entrepreneur, therefore, is justified in assuming a fixed price for his product and in reckoning on increase of income from increase of efficiency and industrial product. Apparently it rarely occurs to the employer that this analysis is not complete. Having assumed that definite laws determine the manner in which income is shared among the productive factors, he apparently concludes, somewhat naïvely, that just as the laborers in society will in the aggregate profit by increase in the social income, so also will the laborers in any individual establishment profit by increase in its income.

To this mode of reasoning, and to the conclusions reached through it, the unionist takes very decided exceptions. To the statement that labor as a whole stands to gain through any increase in the social dividend he returns the obvious answer that labor as a whole is a mere academic conception; that labor as a whole may gain while the individual laborer starves. His concern is with his own wage-rate and that of his immediate fellow-workers. He has learned the lesson of co-operation within his trade, but he is not yet class-conscious. In answer to the argument based on the individual competitive establishment he asserts that the conditions which determine the income of the establishment are not the same as those which govern the wage-rate. Consequently, increase in the income of the establishment is no guarantee of increase of the wage-rate of the worker in it. Conversely, increase in the wage-rate may occur without increase in the income of the establishment. Indeed, in consequence of this non-identity of the conditions governing establishment

income and wage-rate, increase in the gross income of the establishment is often accompanied by decrease in the wage-rate, and the wage-rate is often increased by means which positively decrease the gross increase of the establishment.

The laborer's statements in this instance are without doubt well founded. The clue to the whole situation is, of course, found in the fact that the wage-rate of any class of laborers is not determined by the conditions which exist in the particular establishment in which they work, but by the conditions which prevail in their trade or "non-competing group." The employers of the group bid for the labor of the group under competitive conditions, and thus determine the wage-rate in all the establishments of the group. It is the group income, then, increase or decrease of which raises or lowers the wage-rate in any and all establishments; it is not the income in any particular establishment, or in industrial society as a whole, that is the determining factor. With this commonplace economic argument in mind, the reasonableness of the unionist's opposition to speeding up, and of his persistent efforts to hamper production, at once appears.

Speeding up in any particular establishment may, as we have seen, increase the gross income of the concern. If, however, it is adopted in general throughout the trade, it may result in serious lowering of the real income of the group. This would be apt to result in the case of a common food-stuff. So long as the workers in a single establishment speeded up, the price of the product might be lowered so little that the incomes both of this establishment and of the group might increase. But should the establishments in general increase their output, a decided lowering of the price might be necessary in order to dispose of the product. It is conceivable that competition to sell the increased output might so break the market as actually to decrease the total economic income of the group. In such a case, evidently, outside labor would get the gain resulting from increased effort of labor within the group. The same result might follow where the total income of the group was not decreased but increased by speeding up. Suppose capitalistic competition under such circum-

stances were not keen. Unless the laborers were strongly enough organized to force concessions from the employers, outside labor would still be apt to get the lion's share of gain through increased labor demand resulting from the spending or outside investment of the group employers' increased profits.

If we look at the converse of all this, we see that it is perfectly possible for laborers in any one group to increase their wage-rate at the expense of other groups. It is even possible for the laborers of one group to draw to themselves a larger share of the whole industrial dividend per unit of work by means which undoubtedly decrease the industrial dividend as a whole, and which, applied solely to any single establishment, would decrease its gross income. Take this simple case as a concrete example: Group A may be producers of a good with a comparatively inelastic demand; that is to say, a pretty definite amount of which the community will consume at prices which may vary rather widely. Let the union by restrictive measures decrease the efficiency of the workers and reduce the industrial output of the group. Will not the value of the product per unit go up, and cannot the employer then be forced to increase the reward which goes to each unit of labor effort without any necessary decrease of his own profit, but rather out of the increased price which outside labor has been forced to pay for the products of the group? Such a case is perfectly possible. It is merely an example of monopoly squeeze, with which we are all familiar enough in a somewhat different aspect. *The laborer's efforts to increase his wage-rate without corresponding increase of efficiency may be deplored as selfish and unsocial, but they certainly seem to be perfectly reasonable outcome of the conditions as they exist for him.* Moreover, in this matter of monopolistic striving "let him who is without sin cast the first stone."

But it would be a mistake to suppose that the laborer is always looking for monopolistic gain when he interferes with efficiency of production. The greater part of his efforts in this connection are prompted by the motive of self-protection. His experience with competition has led him to formulate this rule: As against the employer, the competitive strength of the labor

group is the competitive strength of the weakest member; therefore, if wages are not to be progressively reduced and conditions of employment are not to deteriorate for all, the strength of the weakest member must be made equal to the strength of the group. This proposition may appear unsound when subjected to the keen examination of the economist, but the worker knows by experience that, if unemployed or underskilled men are allowed to undercut the wage-rate in order to secure or retain employment, it is possible that they may start an endless chain of displacement and undercutting, which may ultimately reduce the wages and the competitive conditions of employment of the whole group. Thus argues a worker from the facts as he sees them: A is out of work; he must have work to support his family; to get it he will underbid B who is now employed; if A can do the work of B, he may be taken on and B discharged; then B must have work to support his family; to get it he will underbid C; and so on till finally X, Y, and Z have all in turn been subjected to the undercutting and competitive weakening process.

Of course, this presents the extreme case, and the economist will tell the worker that it presents an unreal one. He will learn from the economist that he is leaving out of account an important factor. He will be told that the competition between employers will prevent this degradation of the wage by giving to every man what he produces. But the worker knows that, while the employers are looking for the lowest cost conditions, competition between them for labor is not always keen. He knows that in many trades there is a potential, if not an actual, over-supply of labor which makes it unnecessary for the employers to attempt to get from each other their workmen. Anyhow, he has before him the immediate facts, and cannot be expected to forecast the remote and unseen results. He sees that men do underbid and lower the wage-rate when some are competitively weaker than others, and the only way that he knows of practically preventing this is to shut off all possibility of underbidding through the establishment of uniformity of wages and conditions. This is the key to the greatest part of the working rules which the unionist tries to foist upon the employer. It is to secure uniformity of con-

ditions in order to cut out all possibility of progressive under-bidding, and not because he is seeking deliberately to cut down productivity, that the laborer ordinarily insists on recognition of the union, collective bargaining, standard wage-rate, a normal day, the closed shop, etc., etc.; while at the same time he calls upon the employer for a higher rate of wages.

The examination of this charge, which at the outset seemed clearly to indicate both stupidity and perversity on the part of the laborer, apparently then results simply in confirming the impression left by the examination of the two preceding charges. It seems to show in brief that, however invalid the laborer's ideas and actions may be from the employer's standpoint, they are apparently the inevitable outcome of the peculiar circumstances of his life and work, and that, considering his own immediate interests merely, they are not foolish, but on the contrary quite reasonable.

The whole discussion seems to lead pretty definitely to the following pregnant conclusions: (1) *that men circumstanced differently as to both inheritance and present environment are bound to reach quite different conclusions as to rights, morality, and sound economic policy*; (2) *that employers and laborers are so differently circumstanced that they are likely to differ radically on these points, and are likely to be altogether incapable of mutual understanding in regard to them*; (3) *that these differences do not necessarily indicate any lack of morality or intelligence on the part of either class*; and finally, (4) *that on account of the peculiar circumstances of the laborer's life and work there is growing up a distinctive trade-union view-point which must be reckoned with, as a matter of fact in connection with all practical labor problems.*

Even this fragmentary study of the trade-union view-point is capable of throwing a good deal of light upon the moot problems raised by the organization of labor. Especially is this true with respect to the problem of industrial warfare. The spiritual basis of industrial warfare is evidently this inability of the employing and working classes to draw similar conclusions from

apparently identical data. Here is the typical case in point, provided that our analysis has been correct.

In some industrial concern a situation arises which, in the opinion of workers or employers, must be met by changes in the existing relationships between the members of these classes. It is, let us suppose, a case of machine introduction which carries with it ordinarily a substitution of inferior for superior workmen. The workers meet. They consider the situation from the standpoint of men about to have their standard of living lowered, or to be displaced altogether by others of inferior quality. With more or less deliberation they formulate a proposition which, from their view-point, seems to be sound and reasonable. They assume that they are normal, rational men, and that the employers are rational, also. They cannot see how any rational and fair-minded man can fail to reach the conclusions which they have derived from the facts in the case. The employers, in the meantime, are viewing the situation from a standpoint peculiar to themselves. With them, it is necessarily a case of output and cost—a problem of efficiency primarily based on the assumption that increased efficiency is necessary to the going of the concern, and must benefit employers and laborers alike. From this standpoint, the proposition of the workers, based on an entirely different understanding of the situation, probably appears to be not only an unreasonable but an impossible solution of the problem in hand. Naturally they refuse to entertain it, and instead present a counter-proposition—the reasonable and fair-minded solution of the difficulty from their standpoint. The unions of course reject this. Each side to the controversy, unable to look at the matter from any standpoint but its own, and failing to realize that this is not the only possible, natural, and inevitable angle from which the difficulty may be viewed, rashly concludes that its opponent is trying to play the part of oppressor. The employers angrily dub the laborers blind fools, led by knavish agitators. The laborers with equal asperity, charge the employers with being capitalistic oppressors—exploiters and enslavers of honest labor. The inevitable trial of strength follows. All the while the fact is, unless the case is an exceptional one, that

each side is honestly seeking what it considers to be its rights, and that from its own peculiar standpoint each is demanding only what is reasonable.

If now our analysis has been correct, and this is a typical case out of which arises industrial warfare, it is perfectly clear that the causes of this inability of employers and laborers to understand each other are not superficial, but lie deep down in the nature of men and things. Granting this, two important conclusions follow :

First, it is folly to put forward, as a remedy for industrial warfare, the suppression or destruction of unionism. Unions cannot be destroyed, simply because their spiritual basis—the union view-point—is the natural and inevitable outgrowth of the conditions under which the laboring class has for generations lived and worked. *Before you can suppress unionism you must suppress the worker, or else destroy the conditions which make the worker what he is;* that is to say, you must revert to military absolutism or more toward socialism.

Secondly, *no solution of the problem of industrial warfare is to be founded on sentiment or passion.* The gulf between the employing and the working classes is too wide to be bridged by preaching, patronage, namby-pambyism, or by passionate denunciation. The clergymen think that, if the employers and laborers would only come to church and hear the doctrine of brotherly love, they would clasp hands over the breach. They forget that the workshop and the market are also pulpits from which sermons are being preached from very diverse texts to very diverse conclusions six days in the week and ten hours of the day. Nor are differences of view-point which have been the outgrowth of generations, and are daily reinforced by the hard facts of life, to be overcome by merely patting the other fellow on the shoulder and explaining to him that you are both good fellows, nor even by hobnobbing with him now and then at a champagne dinner. He thinks he understands your motive on such occasions, and this just about measures the extent of the mutual understanding which results. Your after-dinner speeches, however conciliatory

in tone, count for little, because they do not and cannot wipe out those fundamental differences in premise, postulate, preconception, prejudice, motive, and idea, of which the objective difficulties between capital and labor are merely the expression. Nor can blind passion, operating through denunciation and legal restraint or punishment, bring about any possible alleviation of industrial warfare. Three million well-organized men are not to be intimidated by denunciation, and attempts at legal restraint simply force the unions into political activity and bring a little nearer the probably inevitable amalgamation of unionists and socialists into an overwhelming political force.

What, then, *is* to be done? Is there no definite and immediate solution of the problem in hand? There certainly seems to be no immediate solution. It is possible that in time the further development of organization on both sides may make industrial warfare too costly to be engaged in—may gradually foster mutual respect, and, through the ever-increasing practice of negotiation and collective bargaining, bring about a gradual development of mutual understanding sufficient to form the spiritual basis for lasting peace. In the meantime, however, the public will suffer the interruption of service, will have to pay the enormous expenses of the warfare; and the likelihood is very great that, long before peace can be secured in this way, the laboring class, self-conscious and well-organized, will have become politically dominant.

What we really need in this connection is not a search for solutions, but a study of causes. Trade-unionism and industrial warfare are matters of fact. They are so in the same sense that institutions, animal and plant species, and physical conditions are matters of fact. As such they are the outcome of sufficient causation, and the problems connected with them, like all other problems of a scientific nature, are to be solved, if at all, not through passion and sentiment and guessing, but through a study of the causes which produce them.

In short, if we are to solve the problems raised by trade-unionism, we must proceed in scientific spirit. We must put aside passion and prejudice, and look at these industrial troubles

as matters of fact. Calmly and dispassionately we must search for their underlying causes. Only after we have studied the problems thus in the spirit and with the thoroughness of the biologist or physicist, shall we be in a position to say what, if anything, of a remedial nature can be accomplished.

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